

Mr. MONTAGUE. Your rural friend.

Mr. BELCOURT—has had his opportunity of addressing the House, and I would ask him to have a little patience.

Mr. CARGILL. Will the hon. gentleman allow me to put him a question? When did I make any attack on the civil service?

Mr. BELCOURT. What I meant by attack was that hon. gentlemen from year to year get up in this House and say that the Ottawa civil servants receive too big salaries.

Mr. CARGILL. I never said so.

Mr. FOSTER. It was the hon. member for North Wellington (Mr. McMullen) who said that.

Mr. BELCOURT. I am not singling out any side in particular. I say that these attacks have been made by hon. gentlemen on both sides, and let him whom the cap fits put it on. At the moment it certainly fits many gentlemen on the opposition benches. I appeal to every hon. member whether it is businesslike to have clerks getting from \$400 to \$600 per year, and who cannot get any promotion except you jump their salaries to \$1,100 per year. That is a state of things that cannot commend itself to any business man.

Mr. MONTAGUE. We all appreciate the high and mighty airs of the hon. member for Ottawa, but with all due respect to him, rural members have just as much right to speak on matters of administration as those gentlemen who represent urban constituencies, and have just as much knowledge of the civil service. The hon. gentleman has, no doubt, behind him a great force who are anxious to come into the civil service, who see him morning, noon and night, and who want to get as much as they possibly can. No attack has been made on the service from this side by any gentleman to whom I have listened, but we say that a class of work which can be done by writers whose ability demand no more than \$500 or \$600 per year, should not be paid \$800 or \$1,000 per year. No doubt there are technical branches in the service which require special men, and the government have every opportunity for appointing those men and paying them salaries commensurate with their ability and the duties they are called on to perform. I am opposed to this Bill for two reasons. First, it will load up the permanent service. The object of the former Bill was to employ men temporarily and make them serve a period of apprenticeship in which they would have an incentive to secure the good opinion of those above them, on whose good opinion they would have to rely in their struggle to obtain permanent positions. But the object of the government is to enlarge the permanent civil service of the country for political purposes. It has not been shown

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that in the practical working out of the present law any injury to the public service has been done. The government have had good service. Occasionally they have to come here with a special clause in a vote: 'Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Civil Service Act,' but it is better to do that than appoint men permanently who are not specially fitted for their positions, and who are consequently fastened on to the public service without special qualifications. While a great majority of the civil service are very excellent people and do their work well, and earn their money, I know instances of men who were put in the permanent service as third-class clerks who have gone on year after year, partly by political pull and partly by friendship pull, up to the maximum, and to-day are getting \$1,000 a year—and they are not doing work worth \$300.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Who are they?

Mr. WOOD. How long have they been in the service?

Mr. MONTAGUE. Long enough to get their promotion to the maximum of their class.

Mr. WOOD. Who appointed them?

Mr. MONTAGUE. I do not care who appointed them or who they are. I know lots of such cases, and any gentleman who has had anything to do with the departments knows of such cases.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. That occurs under the statutory system.

Mr. MONTAGUE. That is quite true. Men were dumped into third-class clerkships and made permanent officers without qualifications. And they are getting more to-day as officers of the government than they would get in any other business place in Canada for twice the amount of work. Mind, I say these are exceptional cases; I am not attacking the civil service, for the civil service is, on the whole, a body of able, intelligent hard-working men. But, it was to guard the public service against the drone in it that the existing law was introduced in 1895. And, if carried out, it would have that effect. We have heard a great deal of the hon. member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt) with regard to what business men pay their employees. I know something of what business men pay; I know something of what banks pay in this country. Let any hon. gentleman go to-morrow and ask to have one of his sons put in the Bank of Montreal, one of the strongest institutions in this country or in the world, and what will the lad get? He will get \$200 a year.

Mr. PUTTEE. Is that enough?

Mr. MONTAGUE. I rely to some extent, at any rate, on the judgment of financial institutions being as good as that of the hon. member for Winnipeg (Mr. Puttee).